

THE HICKMAN COURIER.

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Three Shot to Death; One Wounded, Thursday Night

Half Pint Liquor Said to Have Been at Bottom of Triple Killing. Claude Johnson Killed Will Collins; Resisting Arrest, He Kills Judge Naylor and is Himself Killed. Victims Died Almost Instantly.

Citizens Up in Arms Against Bootlegging!

Questionable Stores and Dives Visited and Searched Friday by Irate Citizens—400 Strong. Many Arrests and Convictions Follow. Illicit Sale of Intoxicants Blamed for this Shocking Tragedy. Law and Order League Organized. Lankford is Exonerated. Dead Deputy Was Former County Judge.

One of the most shocking tragedies in the history of Fulton county occurred in this city between 7 and 8 o'clock Thursday night resulting in the death of three men and the wounding of a woman.

The Dead:

Judge W. A. Naylor, deputy sheriff and ex-county judge of Fulton county.

Willie Collins, a resident of West Hickman and an employee of the Mengel Box Co.

Claude Johnson, a desperate character, resident of Hickman.

The Wounded:

Mrs. R. F. Collins, mother of Willie, shot in left arm between the wrist and elbow.

The whole affair was enacted within thirty minutes after the first shot was fired, and neither of the dead men live more than twenty minutes after receiving their wounds.

But whiskey or cider, for which Hickman is becoming famous, was indirectly responsible for the triple killing.

The facts, as nearly as we are able to obtain, are about as follows:

Collins Is Killed.

About seven o'clock Thursday night Claude Johnson went over to the home of Frank Collins, in West Hickman on the C. M. & G. Ry., looking for Mr. Collins. At the time Mr. Collins had gone across the street to a neighbor's to get a bucket of soap. In the absence of Mr. Collins, Johnson asked his son, Willie, to come out in the yard as he wanted to have a "private talk with him."

The family noticed that Johnson was staggering and appeared to be under the influence of liquor, and the mother kept the son from going out. In the meantime, the elder Collins, returned, walked through the gate, spoke to Johnson (who at that time he did not recognize), put his bucket at the back of the house and returned, coming through the house. Mr. Collins walked up to the door and peered out through the screen. Johnson remarked: "It has been a pretty day."

Collins then recognized the voice, and immediately following this remark, Johnson asked Mr. Collins to come out in the yard, telling him, as he did his son, "he wanted to talk to him privately."

Mr. Collins stepped partly out, holding the screen door about half way open, and told Johnson just to go ahead and tell him what he wanted to as he could hear him from where he was. He then said to Collins, "what have



JUDGE W. A. NAYLOR
Deputy Sheriff, shot down while attempting to arrest Johnson.

you got it in for Bynum for?" Before the elder man had time to give any explanation, Johnson thrust his hand behind the hip of his overalls, whipped out a revolver and began firing. The house faces west and there are two doors opening onto the porch. Mr. Collins was standing in the south door, while Mrs. Collins, her daughter, Virgie Sharp, with her baby in arms and Willie Collins stood in the north door just a few feet from the father. Johnson was standing in the yard in such a position that Mr. Collins was almost in a direct line between Johnson and the members of the family in the other door.

The first shot hit Mrs. Collins' arm, then entered the lower part of the abdomen of the dead boy. The elder Collins, for whom the shots were aimed, stepped back and Johnson finished emptying his gun at him, but all went into the weather boarding between the two doors. When the gun was emptied, Johnson left. Willie, mortally wounded, staggered to a bed and died within a few minutes. Dr. Chas. Curdin was called, but the young man expired about the time the physician arrived.

Cause of Trouble.

This trouble seems to have related to a whiskey deal. A short time ago, Chief of Police Wright found a youth in possession of a half pint of liquor. When forced to tell where he got it, he said it belonged to Willie Collins. Collins acknowledged that it was his whiskey, but said Claude Johnson got it for him out at Geo. Bynum's. This is where Bynum probably was an innocent party, as Johnson is a brother-in-law of Bynum's and had been staying at Bynum's home, where he doubtless kept his own whiskey. Johnson doubtless conceived the idea that the elder Collins was responsible for Willie "turning him up," and the killing of the young man may have been purely accidental.

Immediately after the shooting a message was received up town asking for officers to go to the scene. Judge W. A. Naylor, deputy sheriff, responded to the call, and in the absence of other officers—some of whom were attending the Fulton fair—Judge

asked Bub Lankford to go with him to look for Johnson—deputizing him for the occasion. Johnson is said to have sworn he would not be taken alive.

After some search and inquiry the officers learned that Johnson had gone toward the old Dodds cotton gin. He also fired some shots along the road and "held up" several people, whom he chanced to meet, thinking possibly they might be officers. Among those stopped by Johnson were Tom and Jim Morris, Mark Upchurch and others.

Naylor Mortally Wounded.

The two officers presently saw the figure of a man in the middle of the street (which is not lighted), south of the West Hickman ward school, going west. He was overtaken just as he crossed N. C. & St. L. Ry. switch track. Judge Naylor walked up, behind him and grabbed him by the wrist of the right hand, in which he carried a pistol. Judge, using his left hand, at the same time addressing him thus: "Is this you, Claude?" As quick as a flash, Johnson jerked loose, wheeled and fired, the bullet entering the left side of his victim's neck. The jugular vein was severed. At the same instant, Lankford fired at Johnson. Naylor fell mortally wounded.

Johnson Shot Dead.

Johnson fired a second shot at the prostrate form and then turned and fired three more shots at Lankford, all of which missed their mark. But Lankford's aim was more deadly; four of his shots hitting Johnson, two in the breast, once in the left arm and once in right thigh. Johnson fell with these words: "I am only sorry I did not get you, you—I!" All Naylor said was to Lankford: "Did you get him?" He was told yes. "Then get me a doctor; I am shot, too." In the darkness Lankford could not see how badly either of the two men were hurt. He grabbed Johnson's gun and then went and phoned for medical aid. Doctor Chas. Curdin responded and found Johnson dead and Naylor dying. Naylor's wound bled inwardly and was gradually choking him to death. The physician made an incision in the wounded man's wind-pipe in an effort to enable him to breathe. This gave him relief for the moment, but the fatal choking could not be thwarted by medical skill, and death soon relieved the good man from earthly suffering. He lived possibly twenty minutes after he fell. After he was shot down, he managed to get his gun out, but was never able to use it. Johnson must have died almost instantly. Both men lay dead almost within ten feet of each other.

Had Bad Reputation.

Johnson's revolver was a .32-20 and is said to have been the same gun used by Bert Wallace in killing Walter Allison, in the lower bottom, Aug. 7th. It will be remembered that Johnson was with Bert Wallace when police officers raided his joint, just west of the city limits, a few weeks ago, when some thirty or more shots were exchanged. Both Wallace and Johnson are now dead and were rated by the officers as "bad men," especially when

drinking.

Buried at Dukedom.

Claude Johnson, his mother and sister, Mrs. Bynum, reside in Hickman. He was unmarried and worked for the Mengel Box Co. The family came here from the vicinity of Dukedom, in Graves county. He has a brother—Chas. Johnson—at Dukedom, who came to Hickman Friday and took charge of the remains, carrying them back to the old home place for burial. Claude was about 24 years old.

Collins Funeral Saturday.

Young Collins was a few months over 18 years of age. He came to Hickman with his parents in 1905, and since that time has been employed in the box factory. Besides his parents, he leaves two brothers, Till, of Hickman; and Alfred, of State Line; and three sisters—Mrs. Lillie Jurney, of Hickman; Mrs. V. Sharp, Hickman; (who was with her parents at the time of the shooting), and

Mrs. Bertha Thompson, of Fulton.

Funeral services were conducted by Rev. C. A. Riggs, at the family residence, Saturday afternoon, and the remains laid to rest in the city cemetery. Willie Collins stood high in the estimation of his friends and acquaintances here, and his untimely death is regretted by all. He was the youngest child.

Excitement Prevailed.

Great excitement prevailed following the news of the killing of Collins and Naylor, as it was not known up town at the time that Johnson had been killed. First reports were that he had escaped and blood hounds were telephoned for before the truth was known. Johnson was also reported to have barricaded himself in the cotton gin and local officers armed with shotguns started for the scene.

Citizens Wrought Up.

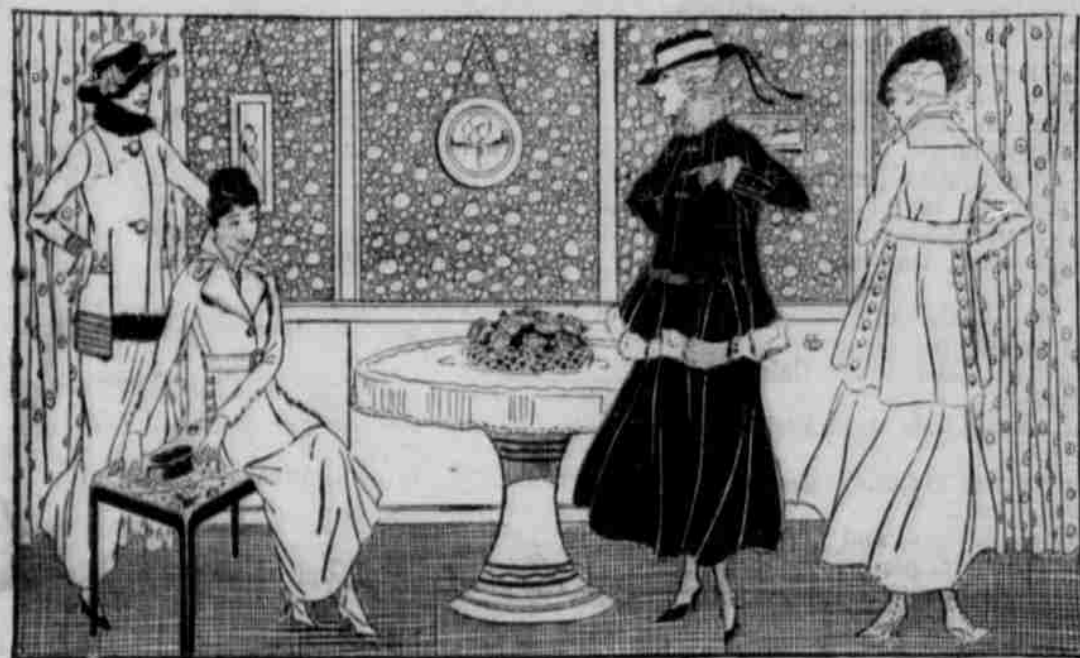
Believing that Thursday night's

killings were the outgrowth of the illicit whiskey and cider traffic, people became so wrought up that they assembled en masse Friday morning, 300 or 400 strong, after many of the business houses locked their doors, and marched from one end of town to the other, searching all stores and dives that looked half-way suspicious.

This was a quiet, determined lot of men and no resistance was offered. In the crowd were preachers, police officers, merchants, bankers and men from all walks of life.

The raid resulted in catching a number of vendors with the goods on. There was a general scurry to rid themselves of their stores when some of the proprietors learned that the citizens were coming to search their places. Some were ordered to get out of town—and got. The city judge and city attorney were right along and gathered such information as was necessary to carry

(Continued on last page.)



New Fall Styles Arriving Daily

An Interesting Collection of Autumn Fashions is Now Shown

These beautiful styles are meeting with hearty approval. Our customers are finding them eminently satisfactory in every respect. They are not only beautiful and becoming, but they are thoroughly practical.

Our display includes the newest styles in women's suits, dresses, millinery, dress goods, etc. An ample variety of fashions is presented. Our prices are most reasonable.

NEW ARRIVALS IN WOMEN'S FALL SUITS

Our display of suits contains the latest and best styles. If you want to learn what is new in suit fabrics, see our display. Prices

\$15.00 to \$30.00

AN INTERESTING SHOWING OF NEW DRESSES

Seldom have we shown such pretty styles as these. Every woman who sees them is enthusiastic about them. The prices also appeal to economical women.

\$6.75 to \$19.75

HAVE YOU BOUGHT YOUR FALL WAISTS?

If not, you would do well to inspect the collection of beautiful new models we are showing. The popular dark colors are here as well as many light colors and white waists. Prices

\$1.00 to \$6.75

NEW WEAVES IN FALL DRESS MATERIALS

Here are all the most popular dress goods and silks—the fabrics that are best adapted to the new season's styles. Gabardines, Broadcloths, Serges, Poplins, in all autumn shades.

50c, 75c, \$1 to \$2

FASHIONABLE SILKS FOR FALL

All the wanted material in a splendid range of the new Fall shades as well as black and white. Taffetas, Dress Satins, Crepe de Chine, Plaid Silks, etc., at a yard.

\$1, \$1.50 to \$2

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